



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314-1000

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

CELO-T (55)

5 June 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR COMMANDERS/DIRECTORS, MAJOR SUBORDINATE
COMMANDS AND FIELD OPERATING ACTIVITIES

SUBJECT: Approval Authority for Use of Premium-class (less than First-class) Travel

1. References:

- a. Secretary of the Army (SA) Policy for Travel for the Department of the Army, 26 Mar 03 (enclosure 1).
- b. DoD 4500.9, Transportation and Traffic Management, 26 Jan 89 (Change 2, 29 Dec 93).
- c. Joint Federal Travel Regulations (JFTR) Vol I and Joint Travel Regulations (JTR) Vol II.

2. This memorandum provides updated guidance per reference 1a changing the process for approval of Premium-class (less than First-class) transportation service. There is no longer any blanket authorization to use premium-class (less than first-class) air travel for overseas travel for any DOD officials, military or civilian.

- a. All official travelers, regardless of rank or grade, must provide a written justification for each request for the use of premium-class (less than first-class) travel at government expense. Travelers may upgrade transportation class of service at any time at their own expense or by using promotional items (e.g., frequent flyer miles) provided that military uniforms are not worn and there is no public advertisement of rank or grade.

- b. Only three and four-star general officers and civilian equivalents (SES 3 and SES 4) not assigned to the Secretariat or the ARSTAF are authorized to approve their own premium-class (less than first-class), on a case-by-case basis.

- c. All other requests to use premium-class (less than first-class) travel will be processed through the travel orders approving chain for decision by the MACOM Commander General (CG) or Deputy Commander General (DCG). In accordance with reference 1b, there is no further delegation permitted.

- d. In all cases, requests must reflect the difference in cost between coach class and premium-class and that alternative travel plans—to include an earlier departure to allow for a rest period—have been considered.

CELD-T

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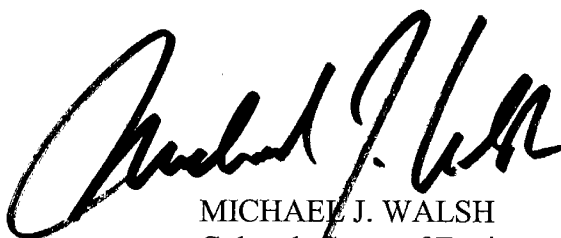
e. After approval by the MACOM Commander or Deputy Commander, the orders approving official will include a statement that authorization has been approved by the CG or DCG in the remarks section of TDY orders (to include blanket orders). Approved requests must be maintained for one year for audit purposes. Failure to obtain approval from the proper authority to use premium class/business class accommodations could result in adverse actions such as the traveler being held financially liable for excess costs.

3. Requests for use of premium-class (business class) travel are to be submitted in writing (via any written media to include email or facsimile) at least 10 days in advance through command channels to HQUSACE (CELD-T), ATTN: Belinda K. Taswell, for Deputy Commanding General decision. Procedures and criteria are at enclosure 2.

4. The point of contact is Belinda K. Taswell, CELD-T, phone: (202) 761-0936; fax: (202) 761-1588.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

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MICHAEL J. WALSH
Colonel, Corps of Engineers
Chief of Staff

CRITERIA FOR USE OF PREMIUM CLASS TRAVEL

Authorization for use of premium-class (less than first-class) commercial travel will be considered in accordance with the JTR or JFTR when:

- 1) Regularly scheduled flights along the route provide only premium-class seats;
- 2) No space is available in coach, and travel is so urgent it cannot be postponed;
- 3) Necessary to accommodate a member's disability or other physical impairment substantiated in writing by a competent medical authority;
- 4) Travel on a foreign flag carrier has been approved by the normal orders approving official in accordance with the JTR/JFTR and the sanitation or health standards in coach are inadequate, as determined by Department of State or the Department of Defense;
- 5) Overall savings to the Government result by avoiding additional subsistence costs, overtime, or lost productive time that would be incurred while waiting for available coach seats;
- 6) Travel costs are paid by a non-federal source;
- 7) Obtained through the redemption of frequent traveler benefits; or
- 8) Travel is direct between authorized origin and destination points (one of which is OCONUS), which are separated by several time zones, and the scheduled flight time is in excess of 14 hours (including stopovers between flights). NOTE: If the stopover is an overnight stay, that disqualifies the traveler from using business-class. A rest stop en route is prohibited when travel is authorized by premium-class, less than first class accommodations. When this authority is exercised, an employee is not authorized a rest period upon arrival at the duty station. The traveler is, however, permitted a short, reasonable time to check into a hotel and freshen up if necessary. This justification shall not be used in lieu of scheduling coach-class accommodations that allow for authorized rest stops en route or at the destination. When returning from TDY, premium-class (less than first-class) travel will not be authorized simply because the total flight time (including stopover) is in excess of 14 hours.
- 9) Security concerns or exceptional circumstances exist that make such travel essential to the successful performance of the mission (e.g., unavoidably severe scheduling demands)

Example: During the workweek, a senior official's schedule requires attendance at official meetings on consecutive days, the later at an OCONUS destination. Due to the inflexible nature of the official's schedule, the official is required to travel overnight and will not receive adequate rest prior to conducting business the following day. Absent adequate rest, the official will be unable to effectively represent the U.S. Army. Accordingly, premium-class (less than first-class) travel may be authorized to allow for the successful performance of the mission.

ENCLOSURE (2)

PROCESSING PROCEDURES

Requests for use of premium-class (business class) travel are to be submitted in writing (via any written media to include email or facsimile) at least 10 days in advance through command channels to HQUSACE (CELD-T), ATTN: Belinda K. Taswell, for Deputy Commanding General decision.

Requests will contain the following information for all travelers:

1. Name, Grade, Position, Title, and Organization.
2. Purpose of trip.
3. Justification to include complete explanation of the circumstances for using other than coach class as outlined in the JFTR or JTR. Medical documentation substantiated by a competent medical authority must be included to support request if the justification is based on a medical condition.
4. Complete itinerary to include dates(s) of travel, time(s), flight number(s), and airline(s) to be used, origin and destination.
5. Additional cost of other than coach class. Show a complete comparison between the costs of premium-class and the regular coach fare.
6. Show complete comparison between costs of rest stop en route utilizing two coach fares and premium-class travel.
7. Reason for delay in submitting request, if applicable.
8. Mission impacts if authorization is not approved.
9. Signature by Traveler reflecting his or her decision to use premium-class travel and that he/she is aware of the cost differential between coach-class and premium-class (less than first-class) travel.

ENCLOSURE (2)